

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2023

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With President Andrés Manuel López Obrador of Mexico in San Francisco, California

November 17, 2023

President Biden. It's good to see you again. We had dinner last night. I told you—you sat next to my wife—you were so captivating, I was worried she likes you more than she likes me now. I don't know.

But thank you very much for being so gracious.

You've heard me say it before: Nothing is beyond our reach, in my view—I really mean it—when Mexico and the United States stand together and work together as we've been doing.

We see it in our security cooperation. We're working side by side to combat arms trafficking, to combat—tackle organized crime, and to address the opioid epidemic and—including fentanyl, which, when we talk privately, I want to tell you about my great conversation with Xi Jinping on that issue.

And we—in our economic cooperation, we're growing our economies from the bottom up and the middle out so that not just the wealthy benefit, but all our citizens benefit from our economic growth.

And we see it in our work to strengthen supply chains, including through the Americas Partnership for Economic Prosperity, and we've been cooperating there as well.

And we see it in our cooperation to address historic levels of migration. And I want to thank you, Mr. President, and your team—I really mean it—for the cooperation and your leadership in taking on this challenge. I know it's not easy.

Together, we're taking a balanced approach that lies at the heart of the Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Protection, and we and 19 other nations have signed on to that agreement. So it includes enforcing our borders, increasing reparations, and opening a historic number of legal pathways for migrants.

So I want to thank you, again. All the things that are of consequence to us—I couldn't have a better partner than you.

Thank you.

President López Obrador. We are highly satisfied of joining you here in San Francisco and have the opportunity to meet President Biden and you.

The relation between our countries is excellent. Our people are friends. This is a respectful and cooperative relationship for development.

In recent years, basically due to this great relationship we have with our neighboring and brother country, we are commercial partners. We are the main trade partners in the world, which is outstanding.

At the same time, there are around 40 million Mexicans working and living with decency in the United States, which strengthens our bonds.

And of course, progress needs to be made—further progress needs to be made to address the migratory phenomenon. We're working on that jointly in coordination. And we wish to thank

President Biden because he is the first President in recent times in opening legal pathways for migration.

In the past, there were no possibilities for people who needed to come to the United States; there were no legal possibilities open. And it is President Biden who opened up this possibility upon a request placed by Central America and the Caribbean countries. They file the petition and after an assessment is made, they are allowed to enter the United States, which means that they no longer have to cross our country with all the suffering and risks such endeavor poses. It's a humane way to address the migratory phenomenon.

And I would also like to express and to state that he is the first President in the United States in recent times who has not built walls. It is true. And we need to continue to support one another so migration is an option and not enforced. We wish to assist the people in their countries of origin when they are forced to migrate. We are fully satisfied in holding this meeting.

And, as regards to drug control, Mexico's undertaking is to continue to support so we do not allow the introduction of chemical components and chemical precursors to fentanyl because we're fully aware of the damage it poses to the United States youth.

This is a matter of humanism. It's an act of solidarity. We are sincerely committed to continue to assist at our fullest capacity to prevent drug trafficking, namely the entrance of fentanyl and other chemical precursors.

I'm pretty certain that we will continue to evolve a good relationship. And I would like to also take this opportunity to greet our *paisanos*, the Mexican migrants who are living and making a life and working in the United States, around 40 million people, who have made the United States their second home, their second country.

And I would also like to inform those who may not be aware of this that in recent years, there are many American citizens who are moving to Mexico to stay there to live in Mexico. So, welcome, because we are brotherly countries.

Thank you. This is what I wanted to say, as well as that we have a great relationship and you have an extraordinary President in the United States, a man with convictions; a man—a good man.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:13 a.m. at the George R. Moscone Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to President Xi Jinping of China. President López Obrador spoke in Spanish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Categories: Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : Mexico, President López Obrador.

Locations: San Francisco, CA.

Names: Biden, Jill T.; López Obrador, Andrés Manuel; Xi Jinping.

Subjects: Americas Partnership for Economic Prosperity; California, President's visit; China, President; Economic improvement; Global supply chain disruptions, efforts to address; Illegal firearms, antitrafficking efforts; Mexico, border with U.S., infrastructure and security; Mexico, immigration enforcement, cooperation with U.S.; Mexico, President; Mexico, relations with U.S.; Mexico, security cooperation with U.S.; Migration flows, international cooperation; Opioid epidemic, efforts to combat.

DCPD Number: DCPD202301030.